

The Office of Bahá'í Education

Ideas Pack for teachers of children's classes

“Blessed is that teacher who remaineth faithful to the Covenant of God, and occupieth himself with the education of children. For him hath the Supreme Pen inscribed that reward which is revealed in the Most Holy Book. Blessed, blessed is he!”

Bahá'u'lláh, Bahá'í Education (1987), p.7

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INTRODUCTION

"We prescribe unto all men that which will lead to the exaltation of the Word of God amongst His servants, and likewise, to the advancement of the world of being and the uplift of souls. To this end, the greatest means is the education of the child. To this must each and all hold fast." (Bahá'u'lláh, Bahá'í Education, 1987, p.2)

Dear Friends,

The Office of Bahá'í Education (OBE) is delighted that you are organising children's classes in your area and we very much hope that this pack helps you in this vital area of service.

"Blessed is that teacher who remaineth faithful to the Covenant of God, and occupieth himself with the education of children. For him hath the Supreme Pen inscribed that reward which is revealed in the Most Holy Book." (Bahá'u'lláh, Bahá'í Education, 1987, p.7)

At the heart of the Bahá'í philosophy of education lies the recognition of three kinds of education: material, human and spiritual. Material education is concerned with the development of the body; human education is about civilisation and progress (arts, sciences, administration and governance); but spiritual education consists of the acquisition of divine virtues and perfections. As Abdul-Bahá says ***"Divine education is that of the Kingdom of God: ... this is true education"*** ('Abdu'l-Bahá, **Some Answered Questions**, p.8-9). The foundation of the Bahá'í principle of spiritual education rests on the recognition that man is a spiritual being. The aim of Bahá'í education is therefore to release the limitless potentialities that lie hidden in each person and to help develop a strong, sincere and moral character dedicated to service to the world of humanity:

"Regard man as a mine rich in gems of inestimable value. Education can, alone, cause it to reveal its treasures, and enable mankind to benefit therefrom." (Bahá'u'lláh, **Gleanings from the Writings of Bahá'u'lláh**, CXXII).

Children's classes are of course one of the three core activities mentioned by the Universal House of Justice (Ridvan 2002) and as they say in their Message to the Bahá'ís of the World Ridvan 2000: "Spiritual education of children and junior youth are of paramount importance to the further progress of the community". Your Bahá'í children's classes could therefore form the foundations of a regular, systematic programme of spiritual education provided at local level and, of course, they can be open to all children, both Bahá'ís and non-Bahá'ís.

The OBE has put together this Ideas Pack with the intention of providing you with some initial pointers and a range of materials which we hope you will find useful as you carry out your classes. We should point out that the lesson plans and all other materials contained in this pack are by way of examples of the type of material and ideas that can be used whilst teaching children. They are not, however, the only material or ideas that may be used. The OBE would like to encourage you to devise your own material and ideas and also to share them with us so that they can be shared with others who are starting up children's classes.

If you require further help or advice then do not hesitate to contact one of the people on the network of contacts list later in the pack. These people have all offered their support to anyone else involved in teaching children's classes so please do contact them for help and advice even if the issue seems small. Also if you have any further questions regarding resources for teaching children's classes then please do contact the Office of Bahá'í Education using the following details:

Mitali Peckham
Secretary, Office of Bahá'í Education
27, Worts Causeway
Cambridge
CB1 8RJ
Tel: 01223 573873
e-mail: obe@bahai.org.uk

For any other issues regarding the education of children please contact your regional Council who will be able to help you. You should particularly contact them with regard to child protection procedures since they will be able to help you ensure that the classes you are running comply with the child protection procedures (See Child Protection Procedures section 9 later in this pack). The four regional Councils are the bodies in the U.K. who have responsibility for overseeing the Bahá'í education of children so they will be able to help you with a range of matters related to children & education as well as the practicalities of running your class.

Good luck with your classes and we hope that this pack is useful for you. Please do give us feedback using the form at the end because if there is anything else that would be useful to include then we would love to know. Thank you.

Yours in His Service
Office of Bahá'í Education

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SHARED EXPERIENCES

Here are some comments from other teachers who are also teaching children's classes – you will see that any concerns you may have or issues your community may face are probably shared by other people! Mostly we hope it is encouraging to feel that there are people across the country, the world even, who are attempting the same thing as you.

- “It’s important to have a vision - of course the recent messages from the Universal House of Justice help with this. This vision must be developed and shared with the Institutions, parents and the whole community in order to get support.”
- “Even when it does not look like anything will develop, press on. Don't let people get dragged down by obstacles.”
- “Persevere till the end, but don't make the end too far away. We had set a goal of reviewing our progress after 1 year. This way, the Friends felt they could commit for 1 year, without feeling the burden of many years commitment to come.”
- “We had cover arranged for the teachers from the educational adviser and the director who were not teachers. 1 class even had 2 teachers who shared the first term. The point being was that there was slack in the system, so that if a teacher couldn't make some lessons, there was cover. This relieved some of the perceived burden on the teachers.”
- “A good adult class is a big help.”
- “Continuity is important - the class was cancelled on 1 occasion when one family who hardly ever turn up, did. This lack of commitment to keep the school going on all the planned days is deadly.”
- “The main thing was that we had fun and spent time together focussed on the Faith. It was good to get to know the children and have fun with them.”
- “We did a bit of role playing on virtues, had a guess the Holy Place game with pictures and captions cut out of old Journals and tried to learn some Hidden Words. “
- “Fostering friendship between the children who meet regularly leading to strong community ties and sense of community among the children which will last them into adulthood.”
- “There are 3 classes, but the range of abilities and understanding within each class is huge, making it difficult to teach each child in an way that is appropriate for them.”
- “It can be a challenge finding dedicated and able teachers, and suitable (reasonably permanent) accommodation.”
- “It is so important to providing a good range of learning experiences e.g. book and art based, service activities, etc.”

- “It’s so exciting to see the children enjoying the classes, wanting to come back again the next week and full of ideas for teaching activities.”
- “As a teacher you have to be able to respond to the children, if you find that they are not engaged by the lesson you have to be able to think on your feet. Recognise when you are flogging a dead horse, adapt what you had planned and ensure you have a plan B.”
- “It can be hard to make sure there are enough Funds for expenses such as accommodation and materials but the community needs to be committed to raising money for the classes – fund-raising events with the whole of the community are a nice way of supporting the school”
- “They all seem to like playing games, it’s always good to have a stock of games as fillers if a lesson finishes early for example. Things that are simple to set up and fairly quick to play so that everyone gets a turn.”
- “It’s very beneficial to have interaction between the classes and the rest of the community at the 19-Day Feast. This is a great opportunity for the children to demonstrate what they have been doing by giving a talk or getting the grown ups involved in an activity.”
- “When we were first faced with all the child protection procedures I just felt that it made everything too complicated but once we actually looked through what is required, it isn’t that much, just a few more forms to fill in, and at least then you know that you have done your bit to make sure the children are protected.”

THE NATIONAL BAHÁ'Í CURRICULUM, BAHÁ'Í SYLLABI, AND BAHÁ'Í TEACHER TRAINING

a) Conceptual DNA – A Curriculum for Life – The National Bahá'í Curriculum

Every community, whether national, political, cultural, ethnic or religious must contemplate what to pass on to succeeding generations. They must decide what to bequeath to their descendents. They have to somehow envision a future in which they themselves may not partake but which perpetuates values, ideas, symbols and insights they hold dear. The ways of being, thought and action developed over the known lifespan of the community must, in some way, be transmitted. It is like replicating a metaphysical DNA. If the transmission is incomplete or does not take place, the community is decultured, extinguished – in one generation.

The contemplation of what to pass on – how much, in what form, with what elements and in what proportions – constitutes, perhaps, the most important activity a community will ever indulge in. It is the conceptual equivalent of biological reproduction – the survival of the species. It is a curriculum.

The U.K. Bahá'í community, having begun to establish a network of formal Sunday Schools and other children's classes or activity groups in the mid 1980s, turned its attention to the process of refinement.

It was also becoming increasingly clear, from letters of the Universal House of Justice to the Bahá'í world, and plans formulated for the U.K. national Bahá'í community by the U.K. National Spiritual Assembly, that the production of a Bahá'í Curriculum was necessary for the further systematisation and development of formal Bahá'í education. Accordingly, a curriculum was commissioned for the National Spiritual Assembly's consideration and approval.

It was necessary, at the outset, to determine why a curriculum was necessary in the first place. Why could the teachers not simply be provided with lesson plans? Why was it necessary to go through the rigmarole of what seemed like a purely theoretical or academic exercise? These concerns, and others held by Bahá'ís, were readily addressed.

A curriculum defines what should be taught and why. It gives us an overall grasp of the totality of what is to be taught and the relationship of each of the elements in it to each other and to the whole. It helps toward a standardisation of educational provision with continuity, consistency and progression. It provides direction and purpose with specific goals set out in manageable stages. It assists in maintaining a balance of elements. It acts as a map or framework that enables us to see overlaps and gaps and allows us to gather and position previously scattered and unrelated learning materials produced with great effort and sacrifice. It also provides a strong focus for teacher training.

Secondly, it was necessary to determine what kind of Bahá'í adults the Bahá'í community wanted its children to be in the future. The answers to this question would determine the broad structure of the curriculum. Bahá'ís, guided by the relevant statements in Bahá'í scripture, wanted children who, as adults, would have acquired:

- i) a spiritual and moral character devoted to sacrifice and service
- ii) a knowledge and understanding of the Bahá'í Faith and other Divinely Revealed Religions
- iii) skills appropriate to the individual, family, social and administrative life of a Bahá'í

Here, then, was mirrored the tripartite nature of education, giving rise to the three attainment targets of the curriculum. From this framework the curriculum was developed, written and approved. It was launched in November 1996 for adoption throughout the U.K. Copies have also gone to over 50 countries. It has already given rise to three Bahá'í syllabi and a Bahá'í teacher training course. As another result of its publication, it is now possible to locate or commission lesson materials that will cover all the elements necessary in a balanced way, for each age group from 2-16 years.

b) “Suits you, Sir” – Syllabi for All Needs

One of the main uses of a curriculum is that of an outline or framework from which to derive syllabi. The word syllabus is used in the plural deliberately, because it is possible to derive many different types of syllabi from the one curriculum, just as many global and regional plans have been derived from the Tablets of the Divine Plan, each with their separate emphases but all with the same fundamental and underlying features.

It is when teachers come to derive their syllabi from a given curriculum that they can exercise choice and creativity. The most important consideration here, perhaps, is answering local need as closely as possible within the accepted curriculum framework.

Syllabi might be said to fall into 4 categories, according to the way they are structured or approached. Each category may be more suited to certain types of delivery system than others.

i) Traditional

This type of syllabus would very closely match the pattern and structure of the curriculum document itself. This would be a formal syllabus, content-based and centred in traditional classroom practice. It would probably best suit children of junior and lower secondary age (7-14), and would be most at home in the setting of a community school or a very regular and formal Sunday school class. It is a very valuable method of introducing stability, continuity, thoroughness and regularity in a situation where education provision has been patchy and erratic.

ii) Theme-based

This type of syllabus breaks free of the subject-based approach and uses themes which cross over the attainment targets and strands of the curriculum. It offers greater flexibility and allows the teacher to be much more creative, though it is much more difficult to monitor the balance of strands covered. This type of

syllabus would probably best suit children of infant and lower junior age (4-8) and would be quite at home in the setting of a wide range of children's classes.

iii) Activity-based

This type of syllabus also breaks free of the traditional approach. Elements of the curriculum are delivered through a range of activities and projects. Although, again, more flexible, it suffers from the same difficulty of monitoring and requires much more careful preparation. This type of syllabus would probably best suit both the youngest of the age groups (2½-4) and the oldest (14-16). This type of syllabus can be adapted for use within a formal classroom setting, but its greatest potential lies in the realm of youth clubs and activities.

iv) Composite

This type of syllabus makes use of elements of all three types described above. In a sense, all good teachers make use of these when planning their programmes of study and their individual lessons. This approach might well be suited to the widest age range and the broadest settings.

v) Open to All

Any of the above can be readily adapted for the inclusion of non-Bahá'í children. Naturally, where non-Bahá'í children join a well-established Bahá'í children's class, which represents the only formal Bahá'í education that the local Bahá'í children receive, care should be taken that the non-Bahá'í parents understand fully the nature of what is on offer. Of course, there is nothing to stop the friends from providing additional activities, which may more conveniently fit during week-day evenings, or during the holidays, in order to accommodate the different needs of local non-Bahá'í children in an inclusive way.

There are already some syllabi available and several more are currently being developed. For further information on how to obtain them and also the National Bahá'í Curriculum, please refer to the resources section below.

c) **“The Ancient and Noble Craft” – A Vehicle for Learning**

Teaching is a highly complex activity composed of a number of inter-related elements. It carries with it a huge responsibility. It is not to be entered into lightly or out of sentimental motivations concerning the sweetness or innocence of children. Nor is it something to shun for fear of disdain or failure. It also carries incalculable rewards, unattainable elsewhere.

Training is the key. Training enables the teacher to identify each component of their task, to isolate the attendant personal characteristics, relevant areas of knowledge, or necessary skills, in order to acquire or refine them. It gives them critical self-awareness so that they can evaluate every aspect of their work and improve on their performance, as well as the monitoring of pupil progress and achievement.

There are certain behavioural traits in an adult that will evoke better responses from children under their charge. There are methods of organising knowledge and delivering learning experiences to children of different ages, which are more effective. These can be learned or enhanced and developed in training.

An untrained teacher would be under much personal stress and strain in the company of children and would have no effective strategies for the basic procedures of the classroom. They would behave inappropriately, teach things in the wrong way, at the wrong time or to the wrong age group, and not know what they had done wrong, other than the poor reaction of those they were trying to teach. It is an act of cruelty to place an untrained adult in a classroom – both to them and to the pupils.

A trained teacher is happier, more confident, more effective and more fulfilled. A well-trained cadre of teachers is the single most important element in the success of any system of education – not the materials, not the premises, nor even the background and capacities of the children. The question of teacher training, then, is the most crucial, in terms of implementing the curriculum developed for teaching the Bahá'í Faith to children and junior youth, whether Bahá'í or not.

For details of how to access teacher training courses please contact your regional Bahá'í Council who will be able to inform you what is available.

HOW TO PLAN A LESSON

It can be daunting knowing how to prepare a lesson if you don't have any experience of it – what should one include, how much should you cover, what teaching methods should be used.... To help you, here is an indication of how to approach planning a lesson and what it is useful to include in a plan. There follow a range of sample lesson plans to let you see how you might go about it and to give you some ideas.

N.B. As you plan your lessons why not tick off which aspects of the National Bahá'í Curriculum you are teaching – this will help you see what you have and have not covered and make sure that you eventually teach your children all of the curriculum. (See above for a section on the National Bahá'í Curriculum, Waiting Upon the Blessed Beauty.)

How to make a lesson: *(Adapted from Bahá'í School Teachers' Handbook – see resources list)*

If your class is a couple of hours long, it will be possible to have a main content lesson of an hour, followed by a 15 minute break for socializing and refreshments, followed in its turn by a more practically oriented lesson of half an hour with music, drama, calligraphy, public speaking, consultation, craft work or language work, and a final session of 15 minutes to finish the first lesson, recap, set homework and sort out any unanswered questions or problems.

Making a lesson is no big deal but it does take a little care and common sense. Here are a few guidelines to start with.

1. Do not be too ambitious. Keep it simple, straightforward and within well-defined limits. Remember that most pupils will only come away from the lesson having learned **one** basic new item of information. Therefore you need plenty of reinforcement of whatever you feel is the basic idea of the lesson.
2. Decide on what your **aim** is to be. What do you want the pupils to know at the end of the lesson? How do you want them to have changed by the end of the lesson? Examples of aims might be:
 - I want them to know that God is beyond physical limitations
 - I want them to be more courteous
 - I want them to recite the Healing Prayer by heart
3. Find and read through the books that you are using as your source material. Write out, in a rough way, all the points you want to cover in a lesson. Put them in some kind of order. Go over your rough plan until you know it without needing to look at it. If you are using quotations then have the exact references for them and the exact wording of the original text. Remember to include the creative Word of God.
4. Remember who you are giving the lesson to: the younger the pupils the simpler the ideas and the vocabulary used.
5. Remember your time limit. Do not waste time preparing material for 5 x 1-hour lesson if you are only able to have one hour on a topic.
6. Make sure that you have something which the pupils can experience for themselves. For example, if you are talking about the different kingdoms then have pictures or examples of animals, plants and minerals.
7. Keep some of your information back in reserve, as it were, to feed to the brighter ones if they ask more probing questions. In other words, do not overburden your pupils with everything you have just learned – their capacity is not the same as yours.
8. Once you have taught the lesson, it might be useful to write it out neatly in full, and give a copy to each pupil in your class. Keep one for yourself and one for the school / classes. Later these lessons can be gathered, edited and made into a book for the use of other Bahá'í teachers.

Children like to have a routine, so it can be a good idea to follow a similar pattern each week – you might like to consider including the following kinds of things in lessons you plan.

Introductory games:

Include 4 or 5 mixed types of games. (See later for some suggestions of games to play)

Prayers and Readings:

Be sure to explain that prayer is talking to God, and they must be very still and quiet. Allow volunteers to read simple prayers. Encourage children to work in pairs, helping each other with the reading. Set an example of being *very* patient while waiting for slow or quiet readers.

Song:

If someone present is able to play guitar and sing, this is wonderful. Otherwise it is enough just to sing the words as best one can. (Children are not at all critical) Each week introduce a new song and sing last week's song, so that by the end they will know half a dozen. Use the Words of Bahá'u'lláh if possible.

Examples: "Blessed is the Spot"

"Say: God sufficeth all things above all things"

"Is there any Remover of Difficulties save God"

"O Son of Spirit! With the joyful tidings of Light"(Introduce a new verse each week)

"Bestow upon me a pure heart"

Short talk or discussion about the theme for the lesson, with children giving their contributions.

Some music or drama around the theme.

Some art / craft work:

Anything you like, but children are always happy just to paint or draw and colour with felt tips. Other ideas may be

1 collage making with fabric scraps, pasta, pulses etc

2 modelling dough - either home-made play doh for temporary use, or salt dough which can be baked and painted next time.

Refreshments.

It will be less chaotic if the children remain seated, and only served if they're behaving well.

Closing prayers.

Games to use up any spare time while children wait to be collected etc.

This is another approach you might use to arranging the different elements of a lesson.

Prayer: Maybe use prayers from different religious sources.

Cooperative game: See following pages

Talk About: the topic of the session

Activity: Painting, modelling, drama, expedition outside etc.

Introduce a virtue: Use the Virtues Guide available from Publishing Trust.

Silent Sitting (May be more appropriate at the beginning or end of the session, depending what else is included.) Play soft music and have the children sit quietly with eyes closed while you describe a beautiful pastoral scene.

Quotation to think about: Introduce to the children during or at the end of the 'silent sitting'. Maybe use extracts from the religions and/or from great thinkers.

Diary: Children could keep a record each week - their own book - with the weekly quote, the weekly virtue and their progress in exercising it.

It is a good idea to make deliberate opportunities to incorporate the following into every lesson:

- a) Encourage every child to express their opinion.
- b) Try to develop everyone's listening skills by consciously making them listen to each other, affirming what is said and checking that children have listened, not only to the leader but to each other.
- c) Try to raise confidence in expressing themselves by taking contributions seriously and exploring them further.
- d) Try to develop in the children the habit of independent, creative thought.
- e) Encourage questions.

SOME EXAMPLE LESSON PLANS

Here are some sample lesson plans which have been devised by other teachers for use in their classes. These formats might give you ideas as to how to plan your lessons.

Greeting Each Other (3-6 year olds)

Introduction / Lesson

In our first Bahá'í children's class, we are going to learn something very special that Bahá'u'lláh wants us to say. This is "Allah'u'Abha". We say "Allah'u'Abha" when we greet each other. When we say "Allah'u'Abha" to our family and Bahá'í friends, we are telling each other that God is wonderful, "God is Most Glorious". We can use it for other reasons too. If we are sad, we can say "Allah'u'Abha". It will help us to become happy because it reminds us of God. If we feel afraid, we can say "Allah'u'Abha". It will help us to be brave. Before we sleep, we remember that God is always with us throughout the night. So we say "Allah'u'Abha". When we wake up, the first thing we should think about is God. So we can say "Allah'u'Abha". When you go home, you can tell your family and friends what you learnt about the word "Allah'u'Abha". Please remember to greet your family and Bahá'í friends with "Allah'u'Abha" every day.

Quotation

The essence of love is for man to turn his heart to the Beloved One, and sever himself from all else but Him, and desire naught save that which is the desire of his Lord.

-Bahá'u'lláh

Story

Teacher reads the book called 'Allah'u'Abha Friends' to the children.

The children then leave the classroom and re-enter, each child practicing greeting the teacher by shaking her hand and saying Allah-u-Abha (+teachers name). When all of the children have completed this exercise and are sitting in a circle again each child is invited to stand up with hands by their sides and say to class..."Allah-u-Abha my name is _____. All the children respond by saying Allah-u-Abha _____. The teacher begins first. When each child has done this the teacher praises them and tells them that being able to stand up and speak confidently and clearly in front of other people is highly commendable.

Song

Allah'u'Abha means
God is most Glorious
God is most Glorious
God is most Glorious

Allah'u'Abha means
God is most Glorious
God is most Glorious
God is most Glorious

Activity

Children are given a piece of paper with the words Allah'u'Abha for them to decorate. The teacher should visit each child and ask the child to tell her about their drawing and praise the child's efforts. Perhaps their work can be displayed at home to remind them of the greeting.

Prayer

O God! Educate these children. These children are the plants of thine orchard, the flowers of Thy meadow, the roses of Thy garden, let Thy rain fall upon them, let the sun of reality shine upon them with Thy love, let Thy breeze refresh them in order that they may be trained, grow and develop, and appear in the utmost beauty. Thou art the Giver. Thou art the Compassionate.

-Abdu'l-Bahá

Allah'u'Abha Friends Book

Materials needed:

- A4 size white cardboard or A4 size white paper
- Black computer generated labels of the word Allah'u'Abha and the children's names or black hand written labels of the same
- 2 hole punch
- 2 rings for cardboard book or staples along left side of paper book
- 1 photograph of each child in the class (to be collected before the first Bahá'í class)

Greeting Each Other (Additional Activities)

- The word Allah'u'Abha is clearly printed on a large card. The children are asked to sit in a circle and pass the card from one child to the other. The song Allah'u'Abha is playing and when this music stops the child holding the card must stand up and say to the group "Allah'u'Abha, my name is..." Then the child sits down and the game continues. The teacher ensures that each child has an opportunity to stand and greet the others.
- The word Allah'u'Abha is printed out twice either in big clear hand written print or in a simple font that is computer generated. The first should be laminated. The second is cut letter by letter leaving the teacher with one word Allah'u'Abha and the other as letters of the word Allah'u'Abha. Before class the teacher hides the letters around the classroom. The laminated Allah'u'Abha is mounted somewhere in the room accessible to the children. The children are invited one at a time to find a letter and match it to the laminated copy.

Family Unity & Consideration (age 4-5)

	Aim & National Curriculum Reference	Activity	Resources
Introductory prayer	AT3a Learning to pray	Light candle & read prayer “Attire mine head with the crown of justice & my temple with the ornament of equity.” (make crown next week)	Candle & prayer book
Review of last week	AT1b Acquiring Virtues - Caring	Read story about caring from previous session. (<i>In previous session we looked at the virtue of caring and homework was to find a story that demonstrated caring</i>)	<i>The Aqueduct</i> from The Love of Bahá’u’lláh & stories brought to class
Main Topic	Unity of family. AT3b duties & rights of a Bahá’í child / how to be a good daughter / son	Look at pictures of different families. What are the families in the picture like? Big/ small, with children / without, old / young etc., different races, etc. The world is made up of lots of different kinds of families & God wants mankind to be united which means that we are all happy and get along well together. If we want the world to be united then our little family needs to be as well – how can we make sure that it is? What do parents do to make families united & what about children?	Pictures of families.
Activity		Draw picture of family to stick in book. Make a family of dancing dolls holding hands. Make up a family tree (if time).	Paper, crayons, scissors & templates for dancing dolls. (See Dayspring Book of Things to Do)
Virtue	Consideration AT1b Acquiring Virtues	Read story about Holy Family – how were they considerate to each other? What does it mean to be considerate? Thinking of others feelings and taking them into account when you act.	<i>The Samovar</i> from Stories of the Greatest Holy Leaf & ‘Abdu’l-Bahá’s Children from Stories of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá
Homework	To be reminded of virtue and how we should act towards our parents	Learn quotation “If thou wouldst show kindness and consideration to thy parents so that they would feel generally pleased, this would also please Me ...” ‘Abdu’l-Baha	Copy of quotation with picture of a family.

Lesson plan for year 10 class

aims:

- a) enhance sense of unity
- b) study the human soul and immortality & how to come closer to God.

objectives: *after fully participating in both the lesson and the preparation for it, the student should be able to:*

- a) give a talk on unity
- b) make a sensible contribution to discussions about the human soul and immortality
- c) feel that they are coming closer to God

materials: Ruhi book 1, Virtues Guide (available from the Bahá'í Publishing Trust) handout and prep sheet (see after end of this lesson plan)

1. Virtue. Unity.

Use about ½ of what is in “The Virtues Guide”. Some of it is put in very simple terms, and it might not be appropriate to read it all. Get students to take turns at reading small parts of it & then discuss all the questions in “What would unity look like if.....” If at any point they indicate that this is too easy for them, skip to the following: (remember:- you are the facilitator, you do not need to know what it means yourself, the youth are to consult about it and draw their own conclusions!)

Whensoever the light of Manifestation of the King of Oneness settleth upon the throne of the heart and soul, His shining becometh visible in every limb and member. At that time the mystery of the famed tradition gleameth out of the darkness: “A servant is drawn unto Me in prayer until I answer him; and when I have answered him, I become the ear wherewith he heareth...”

Bahá'u'lláh, Valley of Unity, The Seven Valleys p.22.

2. Main Topic. Spirituality, The Human Soul.

The soul and immortality. [text in prep.sheet.]

After consulting on any queries students raise (they should all have read it), ask them to consider the following:

What was man like at the beginning of his life?

Where did he receive his capacities and endowments?

List (on board?) some things that man needs in this life, which were given to him in the world of the matrix.

Which endowments should be obtained here for the next life? (work on the analogy of baby in womb unaware of this world but developing eyes etc. what happens when eyes etc. are not developed? what endowments that are not developed in this world will leave us handicapped in the next?)

The Evolution of Man in the Other World. [text in today's handout,
from *Some Answered Questions*, p.217.]

Give out the handout. Students take turns reading from this part, then discuss it.

3. Other topic. Coming closer to God

There are 2 short quotes in the prep. sheet about this.

[they are from “Tablets of Bahá’u’lláh”, p.155, and “Gleanings”, CXXXIX.]

Ask students whether they feel that they are coming closer to God as they grow older. Then refer to the quotes. Do they help us come closer to God? What do they ask us to do? Have students been trying to do these things?

If not, suggest that they do so in the future.

4. Writings & meditation.

Look at the next part of today’s handout (*Hidden Word 44*, for daily reading.)

If time, each read it once, then think about it in silence for a couple of minutes, then discuss meaning.

5. Main Topic.(continued)

If there is any time left, the main topic could be continued by using some of Ruhi book 1 from p.33 onwards (section 6 quote already used above.)

Since the exercises are likely to be too easy with the quote in front of students, copies are not provided. Ask them to listen carefully while you read the quote, then see if they can answer the questions, remembering what they heard.

Preparation sheet for year 10 class

Coming closer to God

"The essence of love is for man to turn his heart to the Beloved One, and sever himself from all else but Him, and desire naught save that which is the desire of his Lord."

"That which beseemeth you is the love of God, and the love of Him Who is the Manifestation of His Essence, and the observance of whatsoever He chooseth to prescribe unto you, did ye but know it."

The soul and immortality

“In the beginning of his human life, man was embryonic in the world of the matrix. There he received capacity and endowment for the reality of human existence. The forces and powers necessary for this world were bestowed upon him in that condition. In this world he needed eyes; he received them potentially in the other. He needed ears; he obtained them there in readiness and preparation for his new existence. The powers requisite in this world were conferred upon him in the world of the matrix... Therefore in this world he must prepare himself for the life beyond. That which he needs in the world of the Kingdom must be obtained here. Just as he prepared himself in the world of the matrix by acquiring forces necessary in the sphere of existence, so likewise the indispensable forces of the divine existence must be potentially obtained in this world.”

‘Abdu’l-Bahá, The Divine Art of Living, pp.18-19.

The Evolution of Man in the Other World

Know that nothing which exists remains in a state of repose, that is to say, all things are in motion. Everything is either growing or declining, all things are either coming from non-existence into being, or going from existence into non-existence. So this flower, this hyacinth, during a certain period of time was coming from the world of non-existence into being, and now it is going from being into non-existence. This state of motion is said to be essential -that is, natural; it cannot be separated from beings, because it is their essential requirement, as it is the essential requirement of fire to burn.

Thus it is established that this movement is necessary to existence, which is either growing or declining. Now, as the spirit continues to exist after death, it necessarily progresses or declines; and in the other world, to cease to progress is the same as to decline; but it never leaves its own condition, in which it continues to develop. For example, the reality of the spirit of Peter, however far it may progress, will not reach to the condition of the Reality of Christ; it progresses only in its own environment.

Look at this mineral: however far it may evolve, it only evolves in its own condition; you cannot bring the crystal to a state where it can attain to sight: this is impossible. So the moon which is in the heavens, however far it might evolve, could never become a luminous sun; but in its own condition it has apogee and perigee. However far the disciples might progress, they could never become Christ. It is true that coal could become a diamond, but both are in the mineral condition and their component elements are the same.

Read the following each day this week:

O COMPANION OF MY THRONE!

Hear no evil, and see no evil, abase not thyself, neither sigh nor weep. Speak no evil, that thou mayest not hear it spoken unto thee, and magnify not the faults of others that thine own faults may not appear great; and wish not the abasement of anyone, that thine own abasement be not exposed. Live then the days of thy life, that are less than a fleeting moment, with thy mind stainless, thy heart unsullied, thy thoughts pure, and thy nature sanctified, so that, free and content, thou mayest put away this mortal frame, and repair unto the mystic paradise and abide in the eternal kingdom for evermore.

Bahá'u'lláh, Hidden Word 44 from the Persian.

EXAMPLE WORKSHEETS, MATERIALS, GAMES AND ACTIVITIES

Here are some worksheets, materials and other activities which will hopefully give you inspiration as well.

1. Baha'i Family Life (5-11 years)

A happy family life is very important to Baha'is. It helps to make happy, healthy people and is the basis of a healthy world.

Baha'i family life starts with Baha'i marriage. Both are based on spiritual ideas and attitudes.

“The true marriage of Baha'is is this, that husband and wife should be united both physically and spiritually, that they may ever improve the spiritual life of each other, and may enjoy everlasting unity throughout all the worlds of God.”

The first purpose of marriage is this spiritual companionship. The second purpose is the rearing of children in the Baha'i spirit.

Baha'i parents try to do everything they can to bring up their children in the love of God, to be well behaved and to learn things which are useful, so that they can become healthy, happy and useful members of society. The raising of children is very important and difficult and a great responsibility. Parents will need to give a lot of time to this and some other activities will need to be sacrificed.

“...know ye in God's sight, the best of all ways to worship Him is to educate the children and train them in all the perfections of humankind...”

Usually it is the mother who looks after the children when they are very young and the father who goes to work to earn money for the family, but there is no reason why these responsibilities cannot be shared in other ways. It is up to the couple to arrange their lives as they think best. The important thing is that the children receive the love and attention they need to develop happily in mind, body and spirit.

Training

Baha'i parents make sure that their children learn about all the religions of the world. Baha'i children are taught to find out truth for themselves, not just follow those around them. They are also taught the equality of men and women and this needs to be shown in the mother and father's relationship.

Children are encouraged to mix with people of all races and religions. They can learn about the different cultures. They should learn to respect the ideas of others and to have open minds. The children are taught to regard themselves as citizens of the world.

Above all, parents try to show their children what is right and how to behave by the example of their own lives. *“A real son is such a one as hath branched from the spiritual part of man.”*

Resolving problems

Saying prayers together as a family will help to build the unity of a family and keep it strong. When a problem comes or a decision needs to be made, members of the family should pray about it on their own or together, so that a solution may be found.

The members of the family should also consult together to help solve their problems or make their decisions. This includes young children who should be taught from an early age the value of consultation.

Unity

Baha'is believe that everyone has the right to their own beliefs. They also have the right to practise their own religion, but they must not cause disunity or unhappiness to others. If one member of a family is a Baha'i and others are not, this should not be allowed to cause disunity in the family.

“The religion of God is for love and unity, make it not the cause of enmity and dissension.”

“Service to the cause should not produce neglect of the family.”

“It is one of the essential teachings of the Faith that unity should be maintained in the home”

(adapted from Warwick leaflet, “family life”, all quotations are from the Baha'i writings)

Questions

1. What does Baha'i family life start with?
2. What does “spiritual companionship” mean ?
3. Baha'i parents try to bring up their children to love
4. In Baha'i families is it only the mother who looks after children ?
5. Should Baha'i children learn about just one religion or all of the religions ?
6. What does investigating truth for yourself mean ?
7. How should Baha'i families solve problems ?
8. What should a Baha'i do if other members of the family are not Baha'i ?

2. Service to the Baha'i community (7-11 years)

Baha'is should spend their lives in service to mankind. Baha'u'llah taught us that when we work in the spirit of serving others, that work is like a prayer or worshipping God. Baha'is should not be lazy or beg. Whatever we do, it should be to help mankind. It is very spiritual if we lovingly sacrifice our own comfort for the sake of others,

Some acts of service are for the Baha'i Faith itself. We can serve Baha'u'llah and the Baha'i community wherever we are, but there are also special projects. Some of these projects are travel teaching, pioneering, year of service and pilgrimage.

Travel teaching

All Baha'is teach the Faith to others by word and deed in their daily lives. Sometimes Baha'is travel from place to place to help teach their Faith. There might be a special teaching project in one area, and Baha'is from other areas travel there to help out. Some Baha'is live very far from the rest of the community and rarely see other believers; a travel teacher might go to visit them and keep in touch. Sometimes the people we teach ask lots of questions, and it is good to have a travel teacher to answer them. If travel teachers come from different countries and cultures it is a lovely way to show the unity of the Faith. The friends and neighbours of the host can see that Baha'is come from all over the world, speak many languages, have different coloured skin, and we are all united in our beliefs.

Any Baha'i can travel teach. To make the most of our effort, we usually contact the travel teaching committee of the Spiritual Assembly. That way the trip is well organised. If you want to travel teach, but are too busy at home; you are allowed to give money to the Fund to pay the expenses of someone else to go instead.

From the writings of 'Abdu'l-Baha...

“ O that I could travel, even though on foot and in the utmost poverty, to these regions, and, raising the call of “Ya Baha'u'l-Abha” in cities, villages, mountains, deserts and oceans, promote the Divine teachings! This, alas, I cannot do. How intensely I deplore it! Please God, ye may achieve it. “

Pioneering

How did the Baha'i Faith spread from Iran to other countries ? How will the Baha'i Faith reach new towns and villages where there are no Baha'is now ? Some devoted Baha'is have moved home and gone to live in new areas. This is called pioneering. Often pioneers have made great sacrifices to settle in a new land. They have left their family behind and perhaps possessions. They are detached and live to serve God and bring the message of Baha'u'llah to new places. Pioneers do not have any special power or authority, they are just ordinary Baha'is like us who have obeyed the request of 'Abdu'l-Baha to spread around the world and teach the Faith. The very first pioneers to go to a new country and settle are called “Knights of Baha'u'llah”.

Year of Service

Many Baha'i youth have given one year of their lives to serve the Faith in a special way. This might be after they leave school and before they start college. It might be a year in between jobs. This is a stage of their lives when they are old enough to serve freely, but they do not have children of their own yet or other similar commitments. The year of service can be spent close to home or far away. Some Year of Service projects are :- helping in a school in Africa; working at the Baha'i Office or at the Baha'i World Centre in Haifa; travel teaching in a small island far from other lands; looking after needy people.... the list is endless.

Pilgrimage

Baha'is can ask to go on pilgrimage to certain holy places. Pilgrimage increases our devotion to Baha'u'llah and deepens our Faith. We can see with our own eyes the special places where Baha'u'llah spent His days on earth and can pray at the Holy shrines where the Manifestation and His Holy family are buried.

More from the writings of 'Abdu'l-Baha...

“ Teachers must continually travel to all parts of the continent, nay, rather, to all parts of the world, but they must travel like 'Abdu'l-Baha, who journeyed throughout the cities of America. He was sanctified and free from every attachment and in the utmost severance. Just as His Holiness Christ says, “ Shake off the very dust from your feet.”

“the aim is this: the intention of the teacher must be pure...”
(Tablets of the Divine Plan, p51)

Service to the Baha'i Community - questions

1. Who should teach the Baha'i Faith ?.....

2. Why should Baha'is work ?
.....

3. What does sacrifice mean ?

4. What is travel teaching ?

5. What is pioneering ?

6. What is year of service ?

.....
.....

7. What is pilgrimage ?

.....
.....

8. Where do Baha'is go on pilgrimage ?

.....
.....

9. If you cannot go travel teaching, what can you do ?

.....
.....

3. Courage (7-14 years)

What is courage?

Courage is being brave in the face of fear. It is doing what needs to be done even when it is really hard or scary. Courage is going ahead even when you feel like giving up. Although courage sometimes means facing danger and standing firm, it does not mean taking foolish risks just to look brave.

We need courage when we try new things, when we face difficult situations and when we have to try again after making a mistake. We need courage to do the right thing even if other people laugh at us or call us names.

Courage comes from what you feel in your heart. It comes from knowing yourself and knowing down deep that you should do something. Courage comes from knowing that God is there to help you when you need Him.

Why practise courage?

Without courage everyone would do only what is easy. No one would try new things that seem hard. Everyone would do what everyone else is doing to avoid standing out - even if they knew it were wrong. Fear would be in charge.

How do you practise courage ?

You do the right thing even when it is hard or scary. You face up to your mistakes, learn from them and keep trying. You try new things, like learning to ride a bike, even if it feels that you'll never learn.

You try to understand something that you are afraid of. Decide if the scary thing is real or imagined. Remember that you can always ask for help when you need it. You can count on God to give you strength and courage.

When you feel afraid, go ahead and feel your fear. Name it, then let it go. Decide what is the right thing to do and go ahead and do it, even if you still feel afraid.

Questions

1. Tick the ones from this list that are signs of courage

Doing what you know is right even when it is hard or scary
Not doing something because you might get it wrong
Pretend that you are not afraid
Doing what everyone else does, even if it is wrong
Admitting your mistakes and learn from them
Asking for help from God and others
Thinking that you can do everything yourself
Doing something very dangerous and taking risks
Trying new things

Doing the easiest thing

2. How would you feel and behave if...

you are asked to speak in front of your school in assembly ?

all of your friends want you to try something like smoking ?

you see another child being teased or hurt ?

you break one of you mother's favourite things, but no one knows who did it ?

you feel scared of the dark when you try to go to sleep ?

4. Faithfulness (All ages)

What is faithfulness ?

Faithfulness is being true to someone or something. It is holding to what you believe is important, no matter what happens. Faithfulness is belief that stands up to the test of time. It is starting on a path and staying on it no matter how many things try to distract you.

Faithfulness is being like a rock in the middle of rushing waters. You stand firm no matter what. It comes from really knowing and living what you believe. When you are faithful you can be counted on and trusted. You show up when you said you would show up.

Faithfulness is needed when you have beliefs that can't be proven to others. If you are faithful to your beliefs, such as belief in God, honesty or friendship, others can see your values in the way you act.

Why practise faithfulness ?

When people don't practise faithfulness, they say one thing and do another. One day they believe something, the next day they don't. You never know what they believe. They probably don't even know what they believe themselves. You can never count on them for anything.

When people are faithful, you know what they stand for and you can trust them. You can count on them to keep their agreements. When people are faithful, they get things done regardless of the distractions that come up. They are faithful friends.

How do you practise it ?

Being faithful means you keep your promises. You only make agreements you can keep.

You practise faithfulness by learning and questioning and finding answers about your beliefs. As you grow in your beliefs, you practise them as faithfully as you can.

Listen to your heart when things come up to test your faith. Faith is not really faith unless it is tested. Your faith gets stronger when your beliefs are tested and you still find that they are true.

When you are faithful in relationships, you are loyal. You don't talk about someone behind their back. If you feel mad or hurt, you go to them and talk about it privately.

What would faithfulness look like if ...

You told your parents that you would come straight home, but your friends ask you to stay ?

You feel some doubt in your beliefs because people you admire don't agree with them

A new friend tries to get you to give up an old one ?

You have some homework to do, but don't feel like doing it ?

You agreed to do a chore for your family every Saturday ?

Which ones are faithfulness ? (circle the correct answers)

You accept a belief without thinking it through yourself

You only make promises you can keep

You listen to your heart when beliefs are tested

You don't believe that anything is important

You keep your agreements

You say one thing and do another

You clear up problems face to face

You do a job as carefully and fully as it needs to be done

You talk about people behind their backs

You do a quick or sloppy job

You are loyal to your friends and family

You make sure that your words and deeds match

You don't keep your commitments

5. Interdependence in Nature (Suitable for ages 4-7)

Ecology Web

Have a large ball of wool.

Stand one child in the centre of a circle to represent an apple tree. Give the child the wool to hold.

Each child in the circle is given the name of a plant, insect, animal or bird that has some relationship with the tree. E.g. robin building a nest, treecreeper feeding from the trunk, squirrel, moth laying eggs. Use a nature book to get more ideas.

As each child tells the tree what he is the tree gives him part of the length of wool to hold.

When all are joined describe things that might happen to the tree. Every time the wool is pulled and every child feels the effect.

Later, make this more complex with several balls of wool showing relationships between other organisms as well.

More Ideas for activities with trees:

Go to look at trees - try to spot signs of dependent or related organisms.

Take bark rubbings

Paint or colour a large tree -- cut out and stick on any related creatures or plants.

Find self-seeded young trees under a parent tree. Remove and replant in a large pot. Later plant out in a more favourable spot for growth.

Think of all the food / other products humans get from trees.

Make a large picture chart. Make a display of plasticine fruits of all sorts.

Draw or paint a large tree. Colour and cut out all types of fruit and stick on the branches.

Explore the idea of oxygen production and the dependence of all animals on plants.

6. Interdependence of People (Suitable for ages 7-11)

Aims: To show that in this country we are dependent on people thousands of miles away.
To introduce the idea of justice in trade.

Geographical origins of food

Ask children to bring in empty food containers and wrappings.
Go through all of them together and discuss where the food has been produced.
Use a large map to label where items have come from.

Play the Banana Game:

Have a two large line drawings of bananas on the wall.
Divide the children into 6 groups and give each group a role as follows:

- growers
- pickers
- packaging company
- shipping company
- importing company
- wholesalers
- retailers

Give each grower a banana. Have the children act out their roles to make sure everyone understands what is happening to the banana.

Tell the children the banana sells in the shop here for 10p.

Have each group present their idea of what payment they should receive in handling the banana. Make them see that it must add up to 10p.

If they can't make it total 10p have them negotiate again.

When a decision is reached draw the shares onto the banana on the wall.

Finally reveal what the true proportions are; draw on the second banana:

- growers and pickers: 1p
- packaging: 2p
- shipping costs 1p
- wholesaler 2p
- retailer 4p

Let the children divide the bananas correctly and give the shares out.

Is it fair? Why not?

7. Transportation issues: (Suitable for ages 11-14)

Aim: For the children to lead themselves to an understanding that it is best to produce food and other goods locally

Explore the possible ways everyday foods may have been transported to consumer.

Children may draw, colour, cut out vehicles to illustrate on a wall picture.

Maybe use plasticine or clay to model ships, planes, lorries, trains etc.

Link up with a large map.

Discuss: transport costs
 deterioration of food
 consumption of fuel oil
 starvation of the people in country areas where exported food is produced.
 Who is making profit anyway?
 What are we doing with potential productive land locally? e.g. their own gardens?

Activity:

Make up a local land-use development plan to feed the neighbourhood.

Paint a big plan and make plasticine trees, fields, vegetables, pigs, sheep etc.

or:

Each child make a model garden plot -- in a shallow box, painting the base and putting on plasticine shapes.

8. Waste (Suitable for all ages)

Activity:

Have the children bring in all the waste packages their family has generated during the week.

Sort it in the following ways and make big charts to show:

country of origin

what they are made of

any links between the materials we throw away and the 'needs' of people elsewhere
e.g. wood wasted in paper and card packaging.

Estimate the costs in making materials just to be thrown away - manufacturing processes, consumption of raw materials, transport costs etc.

Examine different methods of packaging: which are most wasteful? e.g. small packets of snacks inside larger ones.

Why do the manufacturers do this?

Investigate local recycling schemes.

Play the paper bag game (see resources list):

Children make paper bags from newspaper and use to buy food.

9. Ideas for 'silent sitting' (All ages)

If you wish use music to accompany the 'silent sitting'

Ask the children to make themselves comfortable and close their eyes.
Explain they are to breathe out any worries, and breathe in calmness.

Explain the children are to make pictures in their minds and relax.

When the children are ready, read slowly:

- 1) Imagine a beautiful waterfall of light entering the top of your head. Feel the waterfall of light flowing gently and soothingly through your head, down your neck and into your shoulders and chest. The waterfall of light is full of gentle energy. Feel it move through your shoulders, down your arms and out through your fingers.
More light falls as a waterfall down your back, into your tummy, down your legs, out through your toes. As it goes it washes away all the worries and bad feelings.
Feel that you are bathed in a continuous waterfall of light. It is filling you with clean freshness, bathing you in purity. Enjoy its freshness. Enjoy the feeling of light.

When you are ready feel again that you are in the room with your friends. Open your eyes and relax.

- 2) Imagine that you are in a beautiful garden with flowers and trees all about you. The birds are singing softly and brightly coloured butterflies flit from flower to flower. A gentle breeze touches your face, smelling of beautiful flower scents. The sun shines warmly onto your face. Everything is peaceful, everything is calm. You wish you could share this peace with someone.
- 3) Let your mind build the flame of a candle. Feel the darkness all around; feel the welcome glow of the candle's flame. Let it glow brighter and brighter....make yourself become the light growing more and more bright.
Feel the light of the candle flame inside you. Feel it growing and reaching outwards so that your whole body is shining. Feel the radiance reaching out to members of your family. Feel it shining out to your friends. Feel it reaching out to everyone at your school; to your neighbours.
Feel warmth spreading through your body. This is peace and contentment. Feel these things spreading out to everyone around you. You want to live in this inner peace. You want to share it with everyone.
- 4) You are going for a walk in a new place. There are trees and fields, a fence, a gate. You have never been here before. You feel the warmth of the sun on your face. Feel the warmth entering into you. You are surrounded by beautiful-smelling flowers. The warmth inside you becomes love. You have a feeling of love for the flowers. Feel the warmth of the love inside your heart. You think of someone you're not normally friends with. Imagine their face. Feel the warmth of love spreading out to them. See the face of this person smiling at the feeling of warmth. Feel the loving warmth reaching from you to them.

- 5) Imagine you are walking in a beautiful park full of flowers. They are all sizes and shapes, all different colours. Each one gives out a beautiful perfume. In front of you is a very special flower which smells more beautiful even than the rest. You walk towards it and look in among the petals. Hidden there is a special gift for you. It is the gift of LOVE. You feel very, very happy.
- You keep walking and come out from the flowers into a clearing with green grass, and a clear blue sky overhead. The clearing is bathed in warm sunlight. In front of you is a shining blue lake. It is surrounded with trees and shimmering in the sun. Gliding toward you through the water are two pure white, magnificent swans. They glide right up to you and you see that they have brought you a gift. It is the gift of PEACE. You are very happy. You decide that you will take these two gifts so that you can share them. This thought makes you even happier. Feel that you are sending this love and peace to everyone around you. Feel the love and peace that is flowing back to you.

10. Ideas for circle games (Ages 4-7 & some suitable for ages 7-11)

Everyone sits on a chair in a circle.

(With most of these games keep a check of who's had a go and who hasn't --To avoid the same people getting all the turns make children choose someone new instead of having a second go.)

Warming up games

1) To mix everyone up:

Fruit salad. Move round the circle giving everyone the name of a fruit: e.g. orange, apple, banana. Check everyone's remembered what they are. Then call out a fruit. All those children change places. Keep calling out different fruits until everyone is thoroughly mixed. When you call fruit salad they all move. Try not to let it develop into a competition.

2) Getting to know you games:

(Use these games as an opportunity to explain that people are often not how you think. Sometimes we get a wrong impression that someone is, for example, grumpy, but by getting to know them we find we are quite wrong.)

- a) Take turns round the circle to jump up, shout your name, and make a body shape, or little mime. After each person's go everyone copies, all together, shouting the person's name and copying the shape.
- b) Dracula: One person is Dracula in the centre. He approaches someone and says, "I'm going to get you!" then moves forward to tap them on the shoulder. The victim has to shout someone's name and point to them before Dracula can tap them. Dracula then has to go after the named victim. If someone is caught they become Dracula.
- c) Group everyone into pairs - so that partners are next to each other. Give them 3 minutes to find out: a food the other likes, a programme the other likes, an activity the other likes. Then have each child introduce their partner by name to the group and tell what things he likes.
- d) The leader starts by smiling at the child next to her. The child passes the smile to the next person and so on until all are smiling.
- e) A chosen child moves to stand in front of another. The standing child does everything possible (without touching them) to make the chosen child laugh. When he succeeds the standing child sits in the other's place, and the new child moves to someone else to make them laugh.
- f) A chosen child moves across the circle to someone she doesn't know very well and says, "Hello, I'm, its good to meet you!" Then she takes the chair of the child she greeted, who now has a turn at doing the same to someone else.
- g) The children stand in an inward facing circle. Calling out the name of the recipient a child throws a soft ball that the other must try to catch. After their turn each person sits down.
- h) Squeak Piggy Squeak! One child is blindfolded and stands in the centre. A second child directs the first to sit on someone's lap. The blindfold child says, "Squeak, piggy, squeak". The child being sat on squeaks 3 times and the blind child guesses who it is. Continue till they guess correctly, then change roles.

- 3) To show we have a lot in common:
 - a) Have everyone work in pairs with their neighbour. Give them 2 minutes to find out as many things as they can that they both like, e.g. food items, games etc. Feed back to the group if there are not too many pairs.
 - b) Like fruit salad, the appropriate children change places. Call things out, e.g. "everyone who likes pizza", "everyone with black shoes", "everyone wearing blue" etc.

- 4) Exciting games
 - a) Fox and rabbit. An object (ball, balloon, soft toy) is passed round the circle from hand to hand. Explain this is the rabbit. A second object is introduced in the same way. This is the fox. The fox is trying to catch the rabbit, the rabbit is trying to get away. Each child who has the rabbit must pass it on as fast as possible, but the same for the fox. The game ends when the rabbit is caught.
 - b) Birthdays. Establish that everyone knows the month of their birthday. Leader calls out a month and all those with birthdays jump up, run round the circle and back to their seat.
 - c) Duck duck goose. The children stand in an inward facing circle. One child is chosen to walk round the outside. She taps each on the shoulder, usually saying 'duck', but when she taps someone and says 'goose' both children run round the outside of the circle, with the goose trying to catch her before she gets back to the goose's seat. If the goose catches her, he becomes the tapper.
 - d) The keeper of the keys. One child is chosen to kneel in the centre of the circle with eyes closed. A bunch of noisy keys or a tambourine are placed on the floor just in front of her. One person is chosen to steal the keys. They creep up and try to silently remove the keys, run round the outside of the circle and back to their seat. As soon as the keeper hears a sound he jumps up and tries to catch the thief.
 - e) Golden River. One child stands in the centre. The rest all call, "Keeper, keeper, can we cross your golden river?" The keeper responds, "Yes, if you're wearing blue." Everyone who qualifies tries to cross the circle, while the keeper tries to catch them.. Anyone caught becomes the next keeper.

- 5) Acting games
 - a) The leader mimes an action, eg washing her hair, but says to the child on her left, "I am blowing my nose". The child turns to the person on his left, and mimes what the leader has said, but says something different, e.g. "I am swimming". The next child swims, but says something else to the next child and so on round the circle.
 - b) Chinese mimes: Everyone closes their eyes and turns to the right. The leader starts by tapping the child on her right who turns and opens her eyes. The leader mimes a simple action e.g. washing her face. The new child taps the next person who turns to watch the child doing the same mime. The mime is passed all round the circle, and by the end is compared with the original.

- 6) Cooperating
 - a) Children stand in an inward facing circle. They close eyes and walk forward with their arms extended until they touch someone's hand or arm, then they hold that hand. Eventually everyone will be holding with both hands. Open

- eyes, and try to untangle the circle without letting go of each other. (Emphasise being gentle).
- b) Wink murder. A detective is chosen and leaves the room. Everyone closes their eyes while a murderer is chosen. The detective returns. The murderer must wink at people without the detective noticing. Everyone winked at pretends to die. The detective tries to guess the murderer. (If you prefer non-violence you could have a sleep maker instead of a murderer.)
 - c) Leader prepares pictures of pairs - knife and fork, bucket and spade etc. The pictures are put in a container and mixed up. Each child takes a picture. In silence they have to hunt for their partner and sit together till everyone's ready. Then they can take turns to show their pairs to the rest.
 - d) Musical islands. Place sheets of newspaper in the middle of the circle as 'islands'. When the music stops the children must stand on an island. Next time take an island away so its more difficult. No-one must be left in the sea, so they must help each other onto the islands. When its no longer possible stop removing islands, but have a few more turns with the same number.
 - e) The leader prepares simple drawn pictures cut into quarters. The pieces are put into a container and the children take one each. They then have to work together to put the pictures together again.
 - f) Crawl forward -- The children are numbered 1 and 2 around the circle. They get down on hands and knees. The leader calls 1 or 2 and the designated children move one limb forward. Slowly they crawl across the circle to the other side, being careful to manoeuvre very gently as they meet in the middle.
- 6) Calming down games
- a) Rainstorm. The leader begins by tapping two fingers together. The child to the right imitates, then the next child, and so on as its passed round the circle. Everyone keeps it up until the leader changes the action to clapping. Everyone keeps up the old action till the new action gets to them. The leader changes to slapping knees, then stamping the ground, then back through the sequence - slapping knees, clapping hands, tapping fingers. If they imitate correctly the whole process will sound like a rainstorm coming and going.
 - b) Pass the keys. Choose a noisy object. The children have to pass it silently round the circle.
 - c) Hide the ring. Have a length of string with a ring threaded on it, long enough to go round the whole circle. Tie the ends to make a continuous loop. One person is the guesser in the centre. The ring is passed from hand to hand, with the children trying to conceal it. Children can pretend to be passing and receiving it. After 3 guesses someone else gets a go.

11. Ideas for Cooperative Games: (Ages 4-7 and some suitable for ages 7-11)

It's a good idea to include at least one game every session:

- a) to release energy
- b) to illustrate dynamically the principles of cooperation rather than competition.
- c) to illustrate the idea that there doesn't need to be one winner only. Everyone can be a 'winner'.

Active games:

Nets: A variation on 'tig':

Three people are 'on'. They hold hands and try to surround someone with their human chain, or net. Anyone caught this way joins the chain and they try to catch someone else. Continue till everyone is part of the net. In a big group it may be best to break into smaller nets as they grow.

Stick in the Mud.

The person who is on tries to touch someone. The person who is caught stands still with arms and legs spread out. Others try to release him by crawling between his legs.

Circle Tig:

One person is on and chooses a person they are going to try to touch.. Everyone else joins hands and tries to prevent the 'victim' from being touched. They do this by moving the circle around to keep the 'victim' away from the catcher. They must try not to break the circle. The 'victim', when touched, is on.

Games requiring little space:

Rabbit and Wolf:

Players sit in a circle and an object representing a rabbit is passed round from neighbour to neighbour, with no-one omitted. Quite soon a second object, the wolf, is introduced, and must be passed round also, in the same direction. The object for the wolf is to catch the rabbit, the object for the rabbit is not to get caught. The leader occasionally calls out 'change' and both objects immediately change direction. The game ends when the rabbit is caught.

Drawing:

Players sit in a circle. Half of them (or less than half) stand in the centre. The rest lean forward and close their eyes. The children in the centre move behind the others, and each draws a shape with a finger, on one child's back, then returns to the centre. The children open their eyes and take turns to guess who drew on their backs. If a child guesses correctly that child changes with the one who drew on them and the game is repeated.

Birthday Killings:

All stand in a circle. One person calls out a month of the year. Anyone whose birthday is that month must die by falling to the ground. Those nearby must try to catch and support him.

Ideas to call out: number from 1 - 31 for birth date.
 blue / brown eyes
 wearing red / blue / white etc
 wearing jeans / trainers etc

12. More Games (Most ages)

1 minute (Eloquent speech)

Write a word on small pieces of paper and place them in a tub. Each child takes a turn to pick out a piece of paper and they must talk for one minute on that subject. For older children you can adapt this so that they are out if they repeat themselves or hesitate.

Compliments (Seeing the good in other people)

Each person has a piece of blank paper and they write their name at the top. The paper is then passed to the next person. You must write something nice about the person whose name is on the page. Start at the bottom, fold the paper over so your writing can't be seen and pass it on. Repeat this until each child has their own piece of paper back. They then have a list of their special qualities to keep. Try to encourage them to think of less obvious virtues such as being a good listener or being generous.

Team building games

Spoon Feeding (this only works once)

Attach spoons to the end of longish poles and place some food in bowls. Each person has a long spoon strapped to their arm and they can only eat using this spoon. Of course they will only get something to eat if they feed each other!

Quick on the draw.

Place an object outside of the room. The children work in groups and select one person who is allowed to go out and look at the object. That person then has to come back in and describe it so that the rest of the team can draw it. They can go out as many times as necessary but cannot name the object.

Trust

Each child takes it in turn to be blindfolded and has to navigate a series of obstacles with the rest of the group calling instructions. There are several variations of this. Children can work in pairs. Or a 'nightline' can be used, this is where a rope is set up over the course. All the blindfolded children hold on to it at the same time to get over the obstacles as a team.

Don't forget the old 3 legged race.

Any kind of construction game, Lego or Connex can be used as a team game. Select a fairly simple model that a team has to construct and see which team can complete it quickest or set a timer and see which team can complete most of it in the time.

Circle Games

Copypat

The first person performs some simple action that the second person must repeat and then add their own. The game goes around the circle with each person repeating all the actions and adding their own.

Letters

Take it in turns to call out a letter then go around the circle and each person must say a girls name that starts with that letter (no repeating) then each person says a boys name, then names a food, a country, a river etc...

Tell a Story

One person in the circle begins a story, they only say one line. Going around the circle each person takes it in turn to add a line. See how long this can be kept going.

Ball games.

Call out your own name as you throw the ball to someone.

Call out the name of the person you are throwing the ball to.

Call out the name of the person who threw the ball to you as you throw it to someone else.

13. Here is a play which you might like to act out.

The Tree of Life (A play by Chris Abbas)

This is a very simple play that can be performed by one person or several. It is suitable for adults and children. It can be made more interesting by putting lots of expression into the voices, swirling coloured scarves, using movement or dance and by playing background music. If several people are involved there could also be a little group at the side for speaking and singing. Use your imagination!

SCENE: A person or people in interesting sleeping poses, but not lying flat on the floor. (Sleeper awakens, stretches and yawns, and slowly rises)

Voice or Voices: **I saw a tree. It stood so tall. Its branches spread so wide. And on this tree there was fruit. Apples! And plumbs!** (with delight and excitement) **And oranges! And bananas, and figs and melons and strawberries and ... every kind of fruit you could imagine. And this fruit ...** (begins to pick and eat) **... it was more delicious than any other, and all the people in the world came to eat it. When they ate it they felt happier and friendlier and more loving than they had ever done before.** (pause and thinking, then speak with determination) **I will find this tree and I will eat this fruit so that I can be happier and love all the world.**

'Blessed is the spot' music in the background

(Actions can be put to each of the places mentioned)

voice **I will go to every sport, knock on every door, and search every place. I will pass through every city and ask every person (touch heart). Every mountain I will climb and every place of safety I shall seek, whilst every cave I will rest in and every valley I will travel. Every land I will visit and all the seas will I cross. Every island and even all the meadows ill my footsteps tread until I have found this heavenly tree and then I will eat this fruit.** (fade music)

(Play background music to match searching movements. Music and movements begin to quieten and become weary.)

voice: (speak in sad or disappointed tone)

I cannot find this wonderful tree. (pause then look as though people are passing) Here are some others. I will ask them. Have you found the heavenly tree? (No-one wants to be helpful). Oh, where is the delicious fruit? Do you know where I can find the tree? And you?

(Extremely sadly): I have searched for many years and I am so tired, so tired....so tired. (fall back to sleep)

(background music: "Love me that I may love thee" sung gently a few times and sleeper/s begin to awaken again.)

Voice: (looking up and sounding more hopeful): **There was a baby. One the day that He was born the world seemed to cry, " God id Most great! God is Most Great! He shone like a precious jewel.** (A blue or white silky scarf could be picked up from the floor and waved to represent the

ocean). **In a dream His father saw Him swimming in the ocean. His body shone like the sun and His long black hair was floating around Him. (Use the scarf and gentle dance movements). Many fishes saw the light and swam towards Him and each one held a hair. Although there were so many fish, He was able to swim wherever he wanted and the fish swam with Him.**
(continue sea and graceful fishlike movements).

(Allow the scarf to float down to the floor or drape it over your shoulder.)

(Say this in a different tone of voice as if you are trying to say something very important): a wise man said the sea was all the world and this child was to be the King of all the world. Everyone would love Him and obey him and the world would be a happier place.

(pause)

Baha'u'llah! Baha'u'llah! His Name is Baha'u'llah and He will make the people happy. He will tell us many things and we will be happy. He is like a tree and His words are like the fruit. The heavenly fruit. (speaking to the audience): Would you like to have some heavenly fruit? Then we must search and find it.

(Speak as you move off stage): **Come.**

RESOURCES

A) Teaching materials

A range of resources which will be helpful in preparing lessons. Although there is certainly a need for more resources (& the OBE welcomes any offers of materials which can be added to their website!), there is a wealth of things already out there – books, leaflets, websites Some of these are Bahá'í resources but also included are details of some other resources, not Bahá'í in origin, but which you may also find useful.

1. National Bahá'í Curriculum & syllabi

- **Waiting Upon the Blessed Beauty.** National Bahá'í Curriculum to guide us in what to teach our children. Essential document for anyone planning children's classes. It will help you ensure that you encourage your children to acquire a spiritual and moral character, to know and understand about the Bahá'í Faith and to acquire a range of skills appropriate for Bahá'ís. Please send a cheque made payable to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the U.K. for £3.50 to Curriculum, 65, Stoneleigh Park Road, Stoneleigh, Surrey, KT19 0QX. Be sure to include your return address and please allow 28 days for delivery.
- **O God Guide Me.** This syllabus can be used to support the Bahá'í National Curriculum and is designed to be used across a wide age range from the very young to at least junior youth. It should be a help in devising lesson plans in line with the National Curriculum. It has been given a 3 star rating (out of 5) by the Syllabus Review Panel and is approved for use in Bahá'í schools. To obtain your copy please send a cheque payable to the N.S.A of the Bahá'ís of the U.K. to Alan Woodurst, 16, Freshfields Avenue, Upminster, Essex, RM14 2BZ, enclosing your return address. Please allow 28 days for delivery.
- **Light Upon Light.** For details of how to obtain this syllabus, please see **CDs of resources**, point 4 on page 47.

2. Bahá'í Booklets & magazines

- **Dayspring.** Brilliant, beautifully illustrated booklets covering every subject from Thomas Breakwell through games & puzzles, to sacrifice. If you have a child under 15 you should already be receiving this but if not please contact Maggie Manvell on 01471 822317, or e-mail her at maggie@manvell.org.uk
- **Sapling publications.** A range of affordable literature for children including booklets of readings and an introductory leaflet for children about the Bahá'í Faith. For a list of publications please contact Maggie Manvell using the above contact details.
- **Brilliant Star.** American children's magazine. \$18 for 6 issues (1 year) or \$32 for 12 issues (2 years). Contact subscriptions@usbnc.org

3. Websites and e-magazines

- **Bahá'í Education.** A website with a wide range of educational resources from across the world and links to many educational sites, many of which contain resources or lesson plans. <http://www.bahaindex.com/education.html>

- **Insights into Education.** Monthly e-newsletter from Maxwell International Bahá'í School in Canada dedicated to addressing educational issues. The authors share their experience with developing a school “wherein the children, whether Bahá'í or other, will be educated to such a degree, as to become God's gifts to man” ('Abdu'l-Bahá). To subscribe send e-mail to insights@maxwell.bc.ca Also see school website www.maxwell.bc.ca
- **Bahá'í Parenting.** Monthly e-newsletter dedicated to raising families with strong spiritual values. To subscribe send e-mail to bahaiparent@caribsurf.com Also see website www.bahaiparent.com
- **Phoenix Bahá'í Youth Magazine.** Of interest to parents and youth. See website www.phoenix.warble.com
- **National Bahá'í Education & Schools News.** Quarterly publication of the NSA of the USA. Lesson plans and a host of other material. www.education.usbnc.org
- **Australian Internet School.** A systematic way of providing “school” for isolated believers or parents interested in augmenting their child's spiritual education. See website www.internetbahaischool.homestead.com.
- **Words of Discovery.** A website dedicated to providing positive books for children and parents. Designed to develop self-esteem, self-confidence, self-esteem through spiritual awareness and social, moral, spiritual & cultural development. www.wordsofdiscovery.com

4. CDs of resources

- This CD contains the following items:
 1. **In-Home Study Programme.** Comprehensive set of materials (844 pages!) for ages 6-16. Perfect resource if you want to create your own lesson plans and activities.
 2. **Light Upon Light**, syllabus written by Alan Woodhurst, written to help teachers implement the National Bahá'í Curriculum.
 3. **Lesson Plans:** a first set of lesson plans for some year groups to accompany the syllabus, Light Upon Light.
 and is available at price of £3.50. Please send a cheque made payable to *Alan Woodhurst* to Alan Woodhurst, 16, Freshfields Avenue, Upminster, Essex, RM14 2BZ, enclosing your return address. Please allow 28 days for delivery.
- A second CD with further lesson plans to accompany the syllabus, Light Upon Light, will be available July 2003. *Details to be announced.*
- The Office of Bahá'í Education will be releasing a CD later in 2003 with a range of materials. *Details to be announced.*

5. Bahá'í School Teachers' Handbook.

How to run a Bahá'í Classroom with little or no experience. Please send a cheque made payable to the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the U.K. for £6 to Teachers' Handbook, 65, Stoneleigh Park Road, Stoneleigh, Surrey, KT19 0QX. Be sure to include your return address. Please allow 28 days for delivery.

6. A selection of books to give you ideas for games to play

- **Games, Games, Games** A Handbook of Cooperative Games, Ages 5-12, £3.50 The Woodcraft Folk, 13, Ritherdon Road, London, SW17 8QE
- **Let's Play Together** Mildred Masheer, Green Print Merlin Press, 10, Malden Road, London, NW5 3HR
- **Quality Circle Time** Jenny Moseley, LDA, Duke Street, Wisbech, Cambridgeshire, PE13 2AE.

7. Environmental, development and ethical issues

The following resources are available from the Scottish Development Education Centre, Old Playhouse Close, Moray House Institute of Education, Holyrood Rd., Edinburgh EH8 8AQ, Tel: 0131 557 3810. You can request a catalogue entitled "Resources for Scottish Teachers - Resources to bring global issues of equality, justice and environment into your classroom."

- **Windows to Nature** -- helps develop a responsible attitude to the environment. Moves from the personal to the social, from immediate environment to the wider community, and then to the wider world. Ages 5-9, £9.95, WWF
- **The Web of Life: Forests** -- explores the interdependence between people and forests in a warm and cool part of the world. Comparisons between African rainforest and Scots Pine forest. Ages 9—12, £9.00, Scottish DEC
- **Images**-- Looking at gender roles, racism, views of other countries and the future. Ages 9-12, £6.00, The Woodcraft Folk
- **Its not Fair** -- looks at food production, conflict, human rights. Includes games and quizzes, role plays etc. Ages 13-16, £5.99, Christian Aid
- **The Trading Game** -- A simulation game showing how trading can benefit or hinder the development of countries. Ages 10 – Adult, £1.00, Christian Aid
- **Handle with Care** -- A Christian Response to the environment and world poverty. Ages 12 –16, £4.00, Christian Aid
- **Learning Together** - global education with games designed to foster co-operation, self-esteem and communication skills. Ages 5-8, £8.95, WWF
- **Values and Visions** -- A handbook for spiritual development and global awareness. Ages 5 – 11, £9.99, DEP, Christian Aid, Cafod
- **Paper Bag Game** -- simulation game raising issues related to child labour and the problems of living in a society with high unemployment and no social security. Ages 10 – adult, 50p, Christian Aid

Of course this list is not exhaustive but we hope it is useful – please contact us at obe@bahai.org.uk if you have any questions. Perhaps if you do not have access to the web

you could ask a friend to check some of these sites out for you? Also if you have any resources you find particularly useful please let us know so that we can share them with others. Or if you have materials you have written and would be happy to share with others, please let us have them so they can be added to the OBE website and CD.

B) R.E. resources available from Baha'i Publishing Trust

(4 Station Approach, Oakham, Rutland, LE15 6QW, 01572 722780,

bpt.sales@bahai.org.uk, www.bahai-publishing-trust.co.uk)

NBC = National Bahá'í Curriculum. AT1, AT2, AT3 refer to the attainment targets in the National Bahá'í Curriculum & the subsequent letters to the strands within those attainment targets.

Books for teachers

Accents of God (IFD100) £6.95

Important selections from the scriptures of six world faiths explaining their common spiritual foundation and examining how each faith has provided answers to satisfy the human longing for the eternal.

NBC---AT2 e,f.

All in Good Faith (IFD135) £9.95

A resource book for inter-faith prayer with helpful, practical advice, a wide-ranging anthology of short readings from the scriptures of the world, and insights into prayer from a multi-faith panel.

NBC---AT2 e,f.

The Elements of World Religions (IFD250) £5.99

An exploration of the world's major religions, covering doctrines, beliefs, scriptures, ritual, festivals and the lives and teachings of religious figures.

NBC---AT2 a,b,e,f.

Family Virtues Guide (CLP275) £11.99

A multicultural, interfaith handbook giving adults and children alike the tools for spiritual and moral growth through the presentation of 52 virtues – one for each week of the year.

NBC—AT1a

God's Big Instruction Book (IFD355) £7.99

Gems of wisdom from the world's sacred scriptures focusing on the eternal themes of the spiritual life, e.g. our relationship with God, the purpose of life, and the way to spiritual consciousness.

NBC---AT1 a AT2 a,b,e,f.

Multi-faith Information Manual (IFD400) £19.95

Extensive coverage of the world's major faiths.

NBC---AT2 e,f.

Oneworld Book of Prayer (IFD550) £9.99

A rich collection of prayers from the world's faiths.

NBC---AT1 a, AT2 f, AT3 a, b, c.

Thoughts – Education for Peace and One World £9.95 (CLP800) £9.95

A study book for moral education containing quotations from the world's sacred scriptures, instructive and entertaining stories, and questions to stimulate teachers and students.(All based on the virtues).

NBC---AT1a

Other Resources for Teachers

Teaching Peace Songbook (ART820) £15.95

A collection of catchy and appealing songs on theme of peace with teacher's guide included. CD (£13.95) or audio-cassette (9.95) of songs available.

NBC --- AT1 d, AT2 b, AT3 a,c.

Books for children

KS1

Clementine and The Cage (CHI200) £3.95

Confident that there is more to life than her cage, and despite the taunts of other birds in the pet shop, a canary tries to develop her capacities to sing and to fly. Colour illustrations.

NBC targets—AT1a & 1b

The Creator (CHI225) £4.95

A collection of 3 stories for young children about knowing and loving God. Colour illustrations.

NBC--- AT2b

The Flute Player and The Lazy One (CHI360) 4.95

A story about truth and the individual's responsibility to search for it. Monochrome illustrations.

NBC----AT2b & AT3a

The Gift (CHI400) £2.95

The Secret (CHI850) £2.95

The Story of Calvin Caterpillar (CHI860) £2.95

The Story of Daphne Duck (CHI863) £2.95

The Story of Frederick Fox (CHI866) £2.95

The Story of Percival (CHI868) £2.95

The Story of Riaz Redfin (CHI870) £2.95

The Story of Rosie Redbird (CHI871) £2.95

The Story of Warren Wallaby (CHI877) £2.95

Toby's Boy (CHI887) £2.95

What a Mess (CHI895) £2.95

Ziba and the New Kittens (CHI900) £2.95

A series of attractively illustrated (colour) story books about animal characters, each one teaching a specific spiritual quality.

NBC AT1a, b,d,AT2b &AT3c

A Prayer for Fluffy (CHI810) £7.99

Losing and then finding a kitten leads a child to discover that prayers may be answered in unexpected ways. Black and white and colour illustrations.

NBC AT1a & AT3a

Rainbow (CHI825) £3.50

Racial harmony promoted in a story about colours. Colour illustrations.
NBC –AT2a,b & AT3c

Sally's Coat (CHI850) £4.95

A story about owning up and speaking the truth. Colour illustrations.
NBC—AT1b, AT2a, b & AT3a,c.

A Violet in the Garden (CHI890) £4.95

What is it that makes the garden so beautiful? The flowers are about to find out A story about the beauty of diversity. A 'read to' book with colour illustrations.
NBC—AT1b, AT2a, b & AT3c

KS2

Beyond the Rainbow (CHD135) £3.75

Aimed at both children and parents this story endeavours to explore the difficult questions which arise when someone dies. Colour illustrations.
NBC—AT1a AT2b AT3b

The Garden of Baha 'u'llah (CLP301) £4.95

Visual lessons for the study of many aspects of the Baha'i Faith
NBC –AT1abcd AT2abcdef AT3abcd.

The Love of Baha 'u'llah (CHD205) £8.95

Short stories about the life of Baha 'u'llah and how he demonstrated His love.
Inc. colour illustrations.
NBC –AT1a,c AT2c.

From Mountain to Mountain (CHR401) £5.95

The story of the life of Baha'u'llah told in a beautiful style. Pen and ink line drawings.
NBC---AT2c

The Pinckleoffer Mice (CHD600) £4.50

A novel in which a conflict between mice and rats is resolved in a way that which surprises them all. Black and white illustrations
NBC---AT3c,d.

The Promise of World Peace (CLP700) £0.75

A pre-teenage version of a text originally published as a contribution to the U.N. International Year of Peace, which discusses the issues underlying peace in a light-hearted way. Black and white illustrations.
NBC—AT2b, e AT3a,c,d.

Second Birth: The Goal of Life (CHD750) £0.95

Answers questions about who you are, what you are, and why you are. Pen and ink illustrations.
NBC—AT1a AT2b

Stories of Baha 'u' llah (FIG181) £4.95

Although this is really an adult book the short stories lend themselves to re-telling , drama, illustrating etc. Could also be used at Key Stage 3.

NBC---AT2c

KS2-3

Journey to Mount Eternity (CHR401) £4.95

One girl's journey in which the challenges met lead to self-discovery. Black and white illustrations.

NBC---AT1ab AT2b.

The Promise of World Peace (CLP705) £0.25

A youth version of a text originally published as a contribution to the U.N. International Year of Peace, which discusses the issues underlying peace. Black and white illustrations.

NBC---AT2b e AT3a c d.

The Quest (CHR710) £6.95

A story book about a spiritual journey. Black and white illustrations.

NBC ---AT1a AT2b AT3a

The Refuge and The Cave (CHR750) £0.95

A short novel about the development of God's purpose for mankind through world faiths. Monochrome illustrations.

NBC---AT1a AT2f

The Secret of the Stolen Mandolin (CHR800) £2.25

A short novel in which the retrieval of a mandolin from another world becomes a strange voyage of discovery.

NBC AT2b

Two's Company, Three's a Crowd (CHR870) £4.50

Two short stories about teenagers winning out over material spiritual obstacles.

NBC---AT1a,c AT3a

C) Children's Books

(NOT AVAILABLE FROM THE BPT)

Here is a small selection of mostly fiction, and some non-fiction, resources which are primarily suitable for nursery and infant children and to a small extent junior children. (Junior children might benefit from a number of the stories which are aimed at younger children since they could read them themselves and have a more in depth discussion of the issues which arise from them.) All of them are available from, or can be ordered from, most bookshops. Many will also be in your local library. The list has been arranged to show you which parts of the National Bahá'í Curriculum these stories etc. might help you teach. The list does not cover all aspects of the National Bahá'í Curriculum but is a start! - if you have any books you would like to see added to this list then please do let us know (obe@bahai.org.uk) so that we can share them with others.

Concept	Title	Author	Publisher
AT1 Spirituality			
Detachment from the physical realm	The Rainbow Fish (age 2-5)	Marcus Pfister	North-South Books
Thanks and praise	Hugs – a special bedtime prayer (age 3-6)	Pennie Kidd	Lion Children's Books
Detachment from the physical realm	Jamaica and Brianna (age 4-7)	Juanita Havill	Picture Mammoth
AT1 Morality			
7 deadly sins - greed	The Greedy Zebra (age 4-7)	Mwenye Hadithi	Hodder & Stoughton
Acquiring a good character	We Can Get Along (age 4-11)	Lauren Murphy Payne	Free Spirit Publishing
Virtues - courage	Leaving Mrs. Ellis (age 4-7)	Catherine Robinson and Sue Broadley	Red Fox
AT1 Service			
Equality of value of all occupations	Work (age 4-8)	Ann Morris	Lothrop, Lee and Shepard Books
Helping others / universal participation	The Gigantic Turnip (age 4-7)	Aleksei Tolstoy & Niamh Sharkey	Barefoot Books
AT 2 Teachings			
Mankind is one	Play (age 4-8)	Ann Morris	Lothrop, Lee and Shepard Books
Unity in diversity	My nose, your nose (age 2-4)	Melanie Walsh	Transworld Publishers
Unity in diversity	My beak, your beak (age 2-4)	Melanie Walsh	Transworld Publishers
Unity in diversity	W is for World (age 4-8)	Kathryn Cave	Frances Lincoln in association with Oxfam

Abolition of prejudice	All Kinds of People (age 4-7)	Emma Damon	Tango Books
Peace	Peacetimes (age 5-8)	Katherine Scholes	Belitha Press
The world is but one country	A balloon for Grandad (age 5-7)	Nigel Gray	Orchard Picture Books
AT 2 Other Divinely Revealed Religions			
Progressive Revelation, unity of religions	All kinds of belief (age 4-7)	Emma Damon	Tango Books
AT3 Individual Skills			
Different aspects of the individual	You are very special (age 2-5)	Su Box	Lion Children's Books
Learning to practise the virtues	We Can Get Along (age 4-11)	Lauren Murphy Payne	Free Spirit Publishing
AT3 Family Skills			
The generations within a family	Once there were Giants (age 4-7)	Martin Waddell	Walker Books
The generations within a family (the love that binds them)	Guess How Much I love You (age 2-4)	Sam McBratney	Walker Books
The generations within a family	Peepo! (age 3-7)	Janet & Allan Ahlberg	Picture Puffins
The family as a life-long commitment	Love you forever (age 7-11)	Robert Munsch	Firefly Books
Duties and rights of a Bahá'í child	Bye Bye Baby (4-7)	Janet & Allan Ahlberg	Picture Mammoth
Duties and rights of a Bahá'í child	I like it when ... (age 3-5)	Mary Murphy	Picture Mammoth
Being a good brother / sister	Please be Quiet! (age 3-5)	Mary Murphy	Picture Mammoth
Family pride (everyone has a role to play)	Titch (age 3-6)	Pat Hutchins	Red Fox
AT3 Social Skills			
Overcoming prejudice (unity in diversity)	Elmer's Friends (age 2-4)	David McKee	Andersen Press
Overcoming dislikes	Ginger (age 4-7)	Charlotte Voake	Walker Books
Courtesy, hospitality, friendship	Jolly Tall, Ruff & Old Bear (age 4-7)	Jane Hissey	Red Fox

Also a good publisher to look out for is Barefoot Books – they take “their inspiration from many different cultures” and “focus on themes that encourage ... acceptance of other traditions (and) educate our children as the caretakers of tomorrow”. They can be found on the web at www.barefootbooks.co.uk or you can phone for a catalogue on 0870 241 5031.

TEACHERS SUPPORT NETWORK

This Support Network contains the contact details for Bahá'ís who have experience of teaching in Bahá'í Childrens' Classes or Bahá'í Schools. They have volunteered to be on this list as they are willing to offer any help / encouragement / ideas / information etc. that you might need to assist you in starting a Bahá'í Childrens' Class.

You could choose to contact someone who is teaching children of the age – range you wish to cover. Or perhaps you could simply get in touch with the volunteer who lives closest to you. Anyone on this list would be happy to help, and if they don't have all the answers they may well know someone who does!

Don't be isolated, be connected, use the Network.

NETWORK OF CONTACTS FROM SCHOOLS AND CLASSES

Teacher Name	School/Class	Age range taught	Special interests	Phone number	Email
Alan Woodhurst	Ferraby Bahá'í School	3-18 years	Singing & teacher training	01708 250 985	afwoodhurst@hotmail.com
Mark Habibi	South East	7-10 years	Artwork	01273 597 367	mhabibi@hotmail.com
Mehnoosh, Loh	Solent school			02392 340 766	loh.family@boltblue.com
Richard Fusco	Lancaster	1 to 13 years	Secondary school science teacher. Singing.	01524 65556	richard@rfusco.fsnet.co.uk
Steve Thompson	Congleton, Cheshire	12 years upwards	Youth events, deepenings, weekends	01260 279 339	stephen.thompson@dsl.pipex.net
Midge Ault	Spring and summer schools, and National Conventions	3 - 11 years	Dance, drama, learning difficulties	01568 615 285	midgeoff@freenetname.co.uk
Ken Finn	Newcastle Bahá'í School & has taught at national events	KS3 & 4 (7 – 11 years)	Special needs	0191 414 4687	kenfinn@blueyonder.co.uk
Pauline Samson	Liverpool	KS1 & 2 (4 – 7 years)		01925 222 372	

CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES

To make it easier for the Friends - both as individuals and when acting on behalf of institutions - to understand its Procedures for the Protection of Children and Young People the National Spiritual Assembly has prepared a special Guide document. It should be studied carefully by **all** teachers so they can be sure they comply with the Procedures and are in a better position to respond to any child protection issues which might arise. It is titled "**A Basic Guide for the Protection of Children and Young People**" and is available on request either electronically (as attached PDF file) from resources@bahai.org.uk or as hard copy from the National Office.

Any questions which you have about the protection of children and young people should be directed to your regional Council who have the special responsibility to ensure that the Child Protection and other compliance procedures and guidelines developed by the National Spiritual Assembly are applied in all appropriate circumstances.

OBE Starter Pack: Assessment and Feedback

For each item in the list, please tick the appropriate box, add any comments you'd like to make, and return to Mitali Peckham, Secretary, Office of Bahá'í Education, C/o 13, Field Way, Cambridge, CB1 8RW. Please use the reverse side of the sheet to make any further suggestions which you have.
Thank you!

Starter Pack	How useful was it?			Comments/suggestions/tips
	Very	Slightly	Not at all	
Introduction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Shared Experiences	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Article re. National Bahá'í Curriculum, Bahá'í syllabi, and Bahá'í teacher training	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
How to plan a lesson	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Example lesson plans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Example worksheets, materials, games and activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Teaching materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
RE resources available from the Bahá'í Publishing Trust	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Children's books (not available from the Bahá'í Publishing Trust)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Teachers' support network	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Information re. child protection procedures	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

The Office of Bahá'í Education would like to thank a number of people for their work and help in putting together this pack. This pack was originally produced by the Children's Bahá'í Education Service which no longer exists but all the members of that service worked hard to produce it so we would like to thank especially Sahba Akhavan, Shiva Finch, Julia Haviland, Roger Kingdon, Karen O'Donoghue, Mitali Peckham and Clare Whitehead. Also Midge Ault who, on becoming a member of the Office of Bahá'í Education, has added material to the pack and made useful editorial changes.

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